



Scott Spouses Newsletter

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Supporting Deployed Soldiers Has Never Been Easier

One often-repeated question from forward-deployed troops today is some form of: "Does America support what we're doing over here?" Judging by the number of Web sites devoted to that support, the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" But as times have changed, so have the ways to support the troops.

Just because the old way—no more "Any Servicemember" mail—doesn't work anymore, that doesn't mean that troops can't receive mail and care packages from patriotic souls. It simply means finding an organization to help you get that morale-boosting mail to the troops.

Dozens of independent organizations are ready and willing to help those who want to support the troops. They generally fall into two basic categories. The first is the organizations that collect cash or goods to create care packages to be sent to troops who wish to receive them.

One such organization is **Freedom Calls Foundation** (<http://www.freedomcalls.org/>), which uses state-of-the-art communications technology to keep servicemembers connected with their families. Because of Freedom Calls' efforts, servicemembers have "been there" for milestone events such as weddings (sometimes their own), births and graduations.

The **Veterans of Foreign Wars** (<http://www.vfw.org/>) offers a program called "Operation Uplink" (<http://www.operationuplink.org/>) that connects servicemembers with family and friends. The program, begun in 1996, provides pre-paid phone cards to active-duty servicemembers and hospitalized veterans. Again, Operation Uplink accepts cash donations that are used to purchase the pre-paid phone cards. Do-

nations can be made online, via phone or through the mail.

Another supporter of deployed U.S. troops, the **United Service Organizations** (<http://www.uso.org/>), has a program called "Operation USO Care Package" (<http://www.usocares.org/>). The program lets well-wishers sponsor a care package for a monetary donation. USO makes the donation part easy too. All it takes is a mouse click, a phone call or a stamp to mail a check.

The second type of organization pairs supporters with servicemembers who have given permission to release their contact information to an individual. Most of the sites offering servicemember "adoptions" require a minimum commitment of one piece of mail a month.

Adopt a Platoon (<http://www.adoptaplatoon.org/>), not only provides the means to "adopt" an individual servicemember, but an entire platoon. The requirements for each adoption are a little different. Supporters can also ask to be matched with a servicemember as a pen pal.

Operation Military Pride (<http://www.operationmilitarypride.org/>) is another group that focuses on care packages. However, to obtain mailing information for a servicemember, supporters are required to sign up through the site. Like many organizations, Operation Military Pride has several different campaigns in the works to support deployed troops.

There also are a smaller number of Web sites dedicated to allowing a supporter to send an electronic greeting to servicemembers and some that have compiled a list of links to various support Web sites. Care packages are al-

ways nice, but letters are just as good. And sites like **Operation Dear Abby** (<http://anyservicemember.navy.mil/>) and **Letters From Home** (<http://www.lettersfromhomeprogram.org/>) make that very easy to do. Operation Dear Abby provides the means to send an electronic greeting to a servicemember and Letters From Home works with the old-fashioned variety.

If the legitimacy of a site is a concern, check out the list on the **Defend America** (<http://www.defendamerica.mil/>) Web site. While the Department of Defense does not endorse organizations, a DoD official said that the groups listed on Defend America's "Support Our Troops" (http://www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html) page are checked routinely to make sure they are doing what they say they are.

It's also important to remember that some Web sites are easier to use than others. So don't get discouraged, the links are there. It may just take a little looking to find them.

These are just a small sampling of organizations that offer Americans the means to remember and appreciate our troops. There are many, many groups offering many, many ways to show deployed troops that yes, **America Supports You** (<http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/>)!



From the January edition of FLO Notes, available on the Army Families Online website at http://aflo.org/global/modules/Fln.01/versionfile/1389530319_1034673825.html

New Policy for Military Spouse Preference Employment Opportunities

General Information

On June 1, 2001, Headquarters, U.S. European Command (EUCOM), Directive Number 30-19, implemented the Military Spouse Preference (MSP) Choice Pilot Program. This directive established a two-year trial program for exercising spouse preference to positions paid from both appropriated and nonappropriated funds in EUCOM only.

The trial program substantially narrowed the definition of "continuing position," permitting military spouses to accept an unlimited number of temporary, intermittent, or flexible schedule positions without loss of their military spouse preference.

The EUCOM final report on MSP Choice found that the program was positively received by both military spouses and DoD employing organizations in the European theater. In particular, a majority of military spouses stated that MSP Choice increased their employment opportunities for positions in the Federal service.

This policy memorandum implements new Department of Defense (DoD) guidance and procedures applicable to the employment of military spouses both within the continental United States (CONUS) and outside the continental United States (OCONUS). The policy and procedures established herein are effective immediately and apply to positions paid from appropriated and nonappropriated funds. This change applies to military spouses only.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "continuing positions" are defined as positions to which appointments are made without time limitation, and which are required to have a fixed work schedule, i.e., part-time or full-time.

"Non-continuing positions" are defined as positions to which appointments are made with time limitation and/or which do not have a required fixed work schedule. Non-continuing positions include the following:

- Any temporary position, regardless of work schedule.
- Any term position, regardless of work schedule.

- Permanent positions with an intermittent work schedule, e.g., substitute teaching positions with DoD Dependents Schools.
- Nonappropriated fund (NAF) positions with a "flexible" work schedule, or any NAF position for which the employment category is identified as "flexible."

Procedures

Military spouses will be referred using MSP until such time as they accept a continuing position. MSP will not be lost if the military spouse declines an offer of employment in a non-continuing position.

There is no limit to the number of times MSP may be applied to referral and selection for non-continuing positions. Spouses may be simultaneously referred for continuing and non-continuing positions, until such time as eligibility is lost due to acceptance or declination of an offer of a continuing position. However, upon acceptance of a non-continuing position, the spouse's eligibility for preference for other non-continuing positions will be suspended until 60 days prior to the expiration of the non-continuing position.

Military spouses who lost preference on or after the effective date of this policy because they accepted (or declined an offer of) a time-limited position in the Federal service, including NAF, as described in the Priority Placement Program (PPP) Operations Manual, Chapter 14, paragraphs C.4.b. through C.4.f., will have preference reinstated. Reinstatement of this preference is contingent on the spouse meeting all other applicable requirements for military spouse preference.

Military spouses who previously accepted (or declined an offer of) a position with a fixed work schedule and no time limitation (see PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 14, paragraph C.4.a.) will not receive additional entitlement to MSP. Likewise, military spouses whose preference was terminated based on their refusal to participate in established competitive recruitment procedures (see PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 14, paragraph C.4.g.) will not have preference reinstated.

Reinstatement of MSP does not confer any right to priority consideration for employment opportunities that may have been missed prior to the effective date of this policy.

Documentation

Components within CONUS will use the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS) maintained and operated by the Priority Placement Support Branch-Dayton to register military spouses whose preference is reinstated by this policy for both continuing and non-continuing employment in appropriate fund position, as appropriate.

OCONUS and all NAF hiring organizations will establish specific procedures for reviewing and processing requests for reinstatement of MSP.

Accountability

DoD hiring organizations are responsible

for the appropriate and effective use of this authority.

From the Deputy Under Secretary of Civilian Personnel policy memo dated 7 October 2004 and the accompanying DoD Employment of Military Spouses Guidance and Procedures attachment.



Increasing Awareness of the Unique Needs of Military-Connected Children

The facilitators came from Virginia, Missouri, Texas and the local area. The educators came from Colorado, Texas, and the local area. The parents came from both on and off base. The energy that was demonstrated by the groups will fuel positive improvements for military-connected children throughout the world! Sixty-seven educators met on the 1st and 2nd of December to participate in Phases I and II of the Military Child Education Coalition Transition Counselor Institute. Twenty-seven parents met with the facilitators on the evening of 1 Dec to participate in the Military Child Education Coalition Parent Workshop.

The purpose of the Transition Counselor Institute (TCI) is to acquaint educators with issues associated with military life and the effect it has on military-connected children. The TCI focuses on the issues that surround students transitioning from one school to the next. The topics and course instruction focus on the military child but are applicable to *any* mobile student. Transition between schools raises issues such as transferability of student records, course grades, credit hours and the different test requirements from various states. Transition Counselor Institute Phase I covers awareness, processes and networks through the following topics: The military life, challenges for K-12 students in transition, critical issues, research on military students and the impact of transition, understanding the differences in school requirements, navigating the differences – requirements, offerings - and “how to” find out, sending and receiving school responsibilities – the perspective of “from” and “to” populations of stu-

dents-schools-parents, informing-involving-supporting military parents, what works for students-parents-colleagues/teachers, resources available – on base-technologies-MCEC, exploring proven practices and procedures, sharing – building the professional network as a “safety net” for military students, mobility past-present-future – life of the military child, deployment, separation, school support systems, confidence and resiliency – what schools can do, ages and stages – impacts of transition, resources, family support systems, teaching and guiding professional colleagues – setting up an inviting school, military culture – understand and celebrate, post secondary issues and accommodations, and sharing proven practices.

That is a most impressive list, and certainly if you had the patience to read the list, you may imagine that the most often heard comment from the educators during the training was “I didn’t realize that!” This awareness, this knowledge certainly breeds dividends for our military-connected children. For example, since the last training many schools have made improvements to their school Web sites. One school placed their student and parent handbooks on their Web site. Many schools have added calendars to their Web sites. Still others have included contact number and e-mail addresses for each of the members of the staff. One school initiated quarterly newcomer luncheons for incoming students. Another school assigned a buddy for each new student to help them navigate through the new surroundings. One school mentioned that, prior to the start of the new school

year, a new family orientation is held. A review of the student handbook, extra programs, rules and requirements, and curriculum is conducted and questions are answered. Student handbooks that explain regulations and procedures are provided to all students along with daily assignment agendas that are provided to students in the second grade and above. A couple of the schools now hold an annual Veteran’s Day Assembly. Parents are invited to attend this ceremony and reserved seating is provided for military parents. Active duty personnel oftentimes participate in the program.

There are a multitude of challenges faced by our military-connected children. Oftentimes, easing the transition and helping a child through the emotional issues associated with military life is simply a matter of leadership. If the school leadership embraces support for the military-connected child, school policies and procedures fall into place that implement that vision. You can help energize that leadership by becoming an active member of the Community Youth and Transition Council, and attending local school board meetings. You can help increase awareness of military-connected children issues in your local schools. Together we can help secure professional development training for administrators, teachers, and school staff. Your time and talents are worth it and you ARE making a difference. Join the area schools committee, the Community Youth Transition and Education Council, which meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the 375th Airlift Wing Conference Room at 1:00 pm. Help to continue to make a difference in the lives of our children.

Dr. Cindy Doil, School Liaison Officer

FAP Parenting Classes Offered Once Again

Learn how to enhance your relationship with your children and discipline them more effectively using natural & logical consequences, effective praise, preventive teaching, corrective teaching, and teaching your child self-control skills. This video-based class will be

offered on five consecutive Wednesdays from 11:15 am until 1:15 pm beginning on 2 February and ending 2 March. Participants must attend all sessions. All participants who complete the class will be allowed to keep



the \$15 course book and will receive a certificate of training completion. Classes are held in the Family Advocacy group room, building 1533. Please call 256-7203/256-7204 to pre-register or for more information.

NMFA Spouse Scholarships

ALEXANDRIA, VA, January 13, 2004 — The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is excited to announce that applications are now being accepted for the NMFA's Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarship Program. The scholarships are awarded to Uniformed Services spouses (active, retired, reserve, guard or survivor) to obtain professional certification or to attend post secondary or graduate school for an academic year.

Scholarships are normally in the amount of \$1,000.00. The scholarship funds may be used to assist with tuition, fees, books, and school room and board, so long as the funds are paid directly to the educational institution involved. The 2005 Awards were made possible through a donation from General Dynamics and several individual donors. Applications are only accepted online and are due on March 31, 2005.



NMFA recognizes that the military lifestyle presents unique challenges to military spouses. Frequent moves can interfere with military spouses' ability to complete their post secondary education, thus negatively impacting their professional development and long-term career progression. NMFA's military spouse scholarship program is one step toward helping military spouses gain the education that they need to reach their full career potential.

The National Military Family Association is the only national organization whose sole focus is the military family and whose goal is to influence the development and implementation of policies that will improve the lives of those family members. The Association's mission is to serve the families of the seven uniformed services through education, information and advocacy. For more than 35 years, its staff and volunteers, comprised mostly of military family members, have built a reputation for being the leading experts on military family issues.

For more information, please contact Kathleen Burke at 703-931-6632 or visit <http://www.nmfa.org>.

Helpful Websites



Military Homefront

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

MilitaryHOMEFRONT is the central, trusted, up-to-date source for Service members and families to obtain information about all Quality of Life programs and services. Whether you live the military lifestyle or support those who do, you'll find what you need.

The website is divided into three distinct sections, including one specifically dedicated to Troops & Families.

Military life comes with unique challenges. It is a world with a language of its own, a new way of doing things from shopping at the commissary to moving to foreign lands. Having trusted information on how to deal with these challenges can make the difference between stress and success. This is the place to go for the most accurate and up-to-date information about Department of Defense programs serving troops and their families.

Armed Forces Vacation Club

<http://www.afvclub.com>

The Armed Forces Vacation Club (AFVC) is a "Space Available" program that offers Department of Defense affiliated personnel the opportunity to take affordable condominium vacations at resorts around the world for only \$264 per unit per week. The AFVC makes this possible by utilizing "excess" inventory at condominium timeshare resorts. "Excess" inventory consists of condominium units that resort owners do not use, which generally means off-season or short-notice travel. If you enjoy off-season activities in popular locations without the hassle of high-season prices, crowds and lines or if you travel on 10 days notice or less, the AFVC offers an incredible vacations value.

Family Event Calendar for February 2005

Date	Event & Time	Location	Phone
3	Tops in Blue, 7:00 pm	Hangar 1	256-2067
4	Give Parents a Break, 6:00-10:00 pm	Child Development Center & Youth Center	256-8668
6	Brown Bag Reunion Lunch, 11:30 am-12:30 pm	Family Support Center	256-8668
7	Kids Klub, 5:00-7:00 pm	Scott Club	744-1333
8	Enlisted Spouses' Club Meeting, 7:00 pm	Hospital Dining Hall (basement)	233-4690
9	Officers' Spouses' Club Meeting, 10:30 am	Scott Club	746-4033
14	Valentine's Day Dinner, 4:30-6:30 pm (sign up by 11 Feb)	Nightingale Inn Dining Facility	256-8668
14	Valentine's Day Dinner, 5:00-7:00 pm	Chapel 1	256-8668
15	Book Discussion Group, 6:30 pm	Library	256-5100
17	Key Spouse Meeting, 6:00 pm	Family Support Center	256-8668
19	Keystone Club/Teen Council Sale, 8:00 am-4:00 pm	Youth Center	744-9862

Note: Events in **bold** are specifically **Expeditionary Family Events**

This newsletter is a product of the Scott AFB Integrated Delivery System (IDS) Team.
Find more helpful information online at <http://public.scott.amc.af.mil/review/integrated/index.cfm>.